

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-25 ARA-16 IO-13 NIC-01 ACDA-19

SAJ-01 MBFR-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

AEC-11 /173 W

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R 100850Z SEP 73

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8130

INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

USUN NEW YORK 487

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 9037

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH, UR

SUBJECT: PEKING SEES SOVIET THREAT IN THE CARIBBEAN

SUMMARY: AS PART OF ITS PROPAGANDA EFFORT TO EMPHASIZE THE EXPANSION OF SOVIET WORLD POWER AND THE USSR'S GROWING CON-
TENTION WITH THE UNITED STATES, PEKING HAS REPLAYED WESTERN
REPORTS OF INCREASED SOVIET NAVAL AND AIR ACTIVITY IN THE
CARIBBEAN. THE ARTICLE PORTRAYS BOTH THE U.S. AND LATIN
AMERICA AS THREATENED BY THESE ACTIVITIES. CUBAN SUPPORT
OF THE SOVIETS IS ALSO IMPLICITLY CRITICIZED. END SUMMARY.

1. A SEPT. 7 NCNA ARTICLE QUOTES WESTERN NEWS SOURCES
(BASED ON U.S. DEFENSE DEPARTMENT RELEASE) THAT THE SOVIETS
ARE STEPPING UP THEIR NAVAL AND AIR ACTIVITIES IN THE
CARRIBBEAN. IT SAYS SOME SOVIET SHIPS HAVE COME TO WITHIN 30
TO 40 NAUTICAL MILES OF THE U.S. COAST AND SOME AIRCRAFT TO WITHIN
50 NAUTICAL MILES. ACCORDING TO NCNA, "THIS DEMONSTRATION OF
FORCE...RIGHT OFF THE COAST OF THE UNITED STATES HAS EVOKED
'UNEASINESS' AND 'CLOSE ATTENTION' BY U.S. AUTHORITIES." THE
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ARTICLE WARNS THAT THIS SOVIET MILITARY EXPANSION INTO THE WESTERN

HEMISPHERE AS WELL AS ITS "MAKING USE OF MILITARY BASES THERE" POSES A "MENACE TO THE PEACE AND SECURITY OF LATIN AMERICA." NCNA ALSO REMINDS ITS AUDIENCE THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS BEEN UNWILLING TO SIGN THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE TREATY OF PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN LATIN AMERICA.

2. COMMENT: THIS ARTICLE FORMS PART OF PEKING'S CURRENT PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN TO EMPHASIZE SOVIET EXPANSION AROUND THE WORLD; IT IS ALSO THE PRC'S MOST DETAILED TREATMENT TO DATE OF SOVIET MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN LATIN AMERICA. THE VEILED REFERENCE TO SOVIET USE OF CUBAN BASES IS ALSO UNUSUAL. IT SUGGESTS THAT AS ONE COST OF ITS CAMPAIGN TO INDICT SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE PEKING IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT A WORSENING OF SINO-CUBAN RELATIONS, WHICH UNTIL RECENTLY SEEMED TO BE IMPROVING (HONG KONG 7811). NCNA REPORTED CASTRO'S SEPT. 7 DEFENSE OF THE USSR AT THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE AND, WITH OBVIOUS RELISH, THE REJOINDERS BY SIHANOUK AND QADHAFI SUGGESTING THAT CASTRO WAS NOTHING MORE THAN A SURROGATE FOR THE SOVIETS.
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